2022 Board Candidate Biographies

Below are biographies for candidates who are new to the Board of Trustees or new to the role for which they are nominated. Per our Constitution, all members of the Board of Trustees are General Trustees, unless designated as an Officer. Committee chairs are appointed by the President at the beginning of the fiscal year; they are not elected.

OFFICERS

Emily Katz, Financial Secretary

I and my husband, Thad Domina, joined Judea Reform upon moving to Durham in 2015. Our son, Lincoln, soon to be a 5th-generation Reform confirmand, is a rising junior at Riverside High School; our daughter Willa is a rising seventh-grader at Brogden Middle School, and will become Bat Mitzvah in June 2023. Most recently, I served two years as co-chair of the Adult Education Committee, and, before that, three years as a member of the Israel Discourse Advisory Committee. This past year, I also served on the planning team for and as a facilitator of the Caste discussion series. In my non-JRC life, I am primarily a writer of fiction. My short stories have appeared in a number of venues and I’m currently completing work on a novel. I’m particularly excited to have a story in a forthcoming anthology of Jewish feminist fiction from Lilith magazine/Brandeis University Press. I hold a PhD in modern Jewish studies from the Jewish Theological Seminary and am the author of Bringing Zion Home: Israel in American Jewish Culture, 1948-1967 (SUNY Press, 2015), a cultural history of the relationship between American Jews and Israel. I look forward to continuing getting to know and serving this special community in my new role as financial secretary. You can find out more about me at emilyalicekatz.com and contact me at emkatz@mac.com.

Karen O’Mansky, Treasurer
I’ve been a member of Judea Reform for more than 25 years. I’m married to Andy Barron and have two boys, Henry (17) and Ezra (15). I’ve worked for 20+ years at Self-Help, a nonprofit community development financial institution, and currently am director of small business lending. I’ve been on Judea Reform’s Board for 6 years this go-round, with a previous stint in the late 1990s/early 2000s as Social Action chair. I serve on the Finance Committee and was Financial Secretary for the past 2 years. The Judea Reform community has been my community for more than 20 years. My family has found comfort in times of grief, celebration in times of joy, and laughter when we have needed it most. I continue to be grateful for the passion and commitment to fellow members and the broader. I’m honored to be able to give something back to Judea and serve in this way. You can reach me at kareno@judeareform.org.

GENERAL TRUSTEES

Julia Barnard, General Trustee

I was raised in Lawrence, Kansas in my beloved, small, and non-denominational Jewish community. After becoming a Bat Mitzvah, attending B'nai B'rith Beber Camp, and joining a Jewish sorority in college, I went to work as a Tzedek Professional at Texas Hillel in Austin before moving to North Carolina for graduate school. When my partner and I moved to Durham in 2016, we quickly joined Judea Reform Congregation and I began working with a small group of extremely talented Judea teens and fell in love with the Judea community through that experience. After lobbying the NC legislature with that group, I continued to work with the teens and have also served as a teacher in the Religious School, attended the Religious Action Center national conference as a part of the Judea delegation, and am currently serving on the search committee for the new Director of Youth, Education, and Family Engagement (YEFE). I am also on the Board of Carolina Jews for Justice. My partner, Jordan, has also been involved with the burial group, or chevra kadisha, the Racial Justice Committee, and more. After the birth of our son, Simon, in July 2021, I am even more eager to work to create and sustain a community that is welcoming to younger families that may be interfaith, inter-racial, LGBTQ, or just Jew-ish. As for a day job, I now serve as an analyst at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau after working for several years at the Center for Responsible Lending. You can reach me at julia Lester barnard@gmail.com.
Peter Brodsky, General Trustee

I was born and raised in upstate New York, and grew up in Temple Society of Concord, the Reform synagogue serving the greater Syracuse area. My wife Erika grew up in a Coast Guard family and spent most of her childhood in Southeast Alaska. Our two daughters, Dara and Evelyn, are both Durham natives! We joined Judea Reform in early 2019. My wife and I are both teachers in Durham public schools. I teach Culinary Arts and Hospitality at Northern high school and am gearing up for my eighth year there. I am still recovering from many years as a professional chef before entering education. I am currently serving on the Religious Practices Committee and also working with the Search Taskforce for the Director of Youth, Education, and Family Engagement (YEFE). I don't expect to lead a committee just yet, but when the need arises I'm in! My hope is that I can bring a good mix of levity and logistics to the board. I tend to focus a lot on predicting potential pitfalls in planning and safeguarding against them. My wife calls this my 'constructive cynicism'. I also hope that I can represent the needs and interests of other families with young children like mine as we help to steer JRC into the future. Thank you all for considering my addition to the board of trustees! I can be reached at iambrodsky@gmail.com

Chip Carnathan, General Trustee

Jane and I have been members of Judea Reform since moving to Hillsborough 15 years ago from Colorado. We have two adult sons, a wonderful daughter-in-law, and a terrific grandson. I retired two years ago after a 40-year career in biotechnology, which saw us living in Massachusetts, Illinois, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Colorado, before my transfer to North Carolina. With each relocation, we turned to the Jewish community to help us settle in and to develop a connection to the community in our new location. This practice continued when we moved here, when Judea Reform welcomed us to a seder on the first night of Passover, 2007, which happened to be our very first night in North Carolina. We have found a real home in this Congregation and both of us love to help the Congregation whenever we can. Since arriving, I have served on the Social Action and Adult Education Committees, served on the Board for 6 years followed by a two-year stint as a member of the Executive Committee, when I served as a Vice President and the Treasurer. My contributions to the Board included membership on the
Nominating and the Cemetery committees and on various ad hoc task forces. For ten years, I represented Judea on the Durham CROP Hunger Work organizing Committee. Finally, when Judea Reform co-sponsored the construction of a Habitat for Humanity home in honor of Rabbi Friedman, I began my volunteer association with that organization, an effort that continues today. I am looking forward to returning to the Board as a General Trustee, where I hope to contribute to building our strong Social Action and Adult Education offerings. I can be reached at chipcarnathan@yahoo.com

Joseph T. “Chip” Hughes Jr., General Trustee

For my wife, Janis Kupersmidt and I, our connection to Judea Reform deepened in 1989 when our Congregation’s founding Rabbi, Efraim Rosenzweig, performed our wedding. Over the years, JRC has been a spiritual home and a beloved community for raising children, celebrating life events and making lifelong friends. Most recently, I have retired from the federal government after over thirty years of focusing on environmental and occupational health issues. This year of 5782 has been my year of living Jewishly. Since Rosh Hashanah, I have been focused on converting to Judaism with Rabbi Soffer and becoming a Bar Mitzvah with Stacy Lubov and our amazing Anshei Mitzvah program. My life passion has been social justice and I hope to contribute to JRC’s incredible Social Action Program and our shared mission of Tikkun Olam. I can be reached at chiphughes@gmail.com